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Nixon & Vanderhye
8th Floor
1100 North Glebe Road
Arlington, VA 22201-4714

EXAMINER

BRUCKART, BENJAMIN R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2155

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/701,194

Applicant(s)

BUSUIOC, NICOLAE MARIUS

Examiner

Benjamin R Bruckart

Art Unit

2155

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 November 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Detailed Action

Claims 1-26 are pending in this Office Action.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement filed on paper 4 has been considered.

Preliminary Amendment

The preliminary amendment filed 11/27/00 has been entered.

Claim Objections

Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 are objected to because of the following informalities:

The word "customised" is a misspelling. Please substitute the word "customized."

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 4,14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 4 recites the limitation "the host-selector" in on line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 14 recites the limitation "the first and second advertising boards" in on lines 2 and 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,931,907 by Davies et al.

Regarding claim 1, a distributed agent system including an agent-configurator, the agent Configurator (Davies: col. 1, lines 28-40) including:

(a) an agent component selector for allowing user selection of one or more of a plurality of possible agent components (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50);

(b) an agent process selector for allowing user selection of one or more of a plurality of possible processes for use by the selected agent components (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50; col. 4, lines 18-21), and

(c) a customised agent description store for grouping the selected components and processes together, the said grouping defining the customised agent (Davies: col. 1, lines 51-56).

Regarding claim 2, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agents include:

- a plurality of agent components, each of which includes processes arranged to carry out a particular task for the agent (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50; col. 4, lines 18-21);
- a group message board within at least some of the components, for mediating communications between processes of the same component (Davies: col. 1, lines 51-56);
- an internal message board, for mediating communications between processes of different components (Davies: col. 4, lines 18-21; col. 5, lines 25-36), and
- an external message board, for mediating communications with other agents in the agent community (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-62).

Regarding claim 3, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 1, including a host-selector, arranged to determine the physical location of each customised agent, within the system, based on agent deployment policies or rules (Davies: col. 5, line 23; col. 2, lines 20-44).

Regarding claim 4, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 1 in which the host-selector is further arranged to allow the user manually to determine the physical location of each customised agent (Davies: col. 6, lines 33 – col. 7, line 5).

Regarding claim 5, a method of creating user-customised agents for use in a distributed network (Davies: col. 1, lines 28-40), the method comprising:

- (a) selecting one or more agent components from a plurality of possible agent components (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50);
- (b) selecting one or more processes for use by the selected components from a plurality of possible processes (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50; col. 4, lines 18-21), and
- (c) grouping the selected processes and components together to create a customised agent (Davies: col. 1, lines 51-56).

Regarding claim 6, a method of creating user-customised agents as claimed in claim 5, including automatically determining the location of each customised agent, within the system, based on

pre-defined deployment policies or rules (Davies: col. 5, line 23; col. 2, lines 20-44; col. 1, lines 44-50).

Regarding claim 7, a distributed platform for co-ordinating user access to information provided by content service providers (Davies: col. 1, lines 28-40), the platform comprising:

- (a) a user interface (Davies: col. 3, lines 25-35, 41-45);
- (b) a first advertising board for advertising services of information brokers (Davies: col. 4, lines 38-44; page in question);
- (c) a first searching agent for searching the first advertising board for services based on the request from the user (Davies: col. 4, lines 30-44);
- (d) a second advertising board for advertising the services of information content suppliers (Davies: col. 4, lines 3-44);
- (e) a second searching agent for searching the second advertising board for available services based on results of the search of the first advertising means and the request from the user (Davies: col. 4, lines 58- col. 5, line 13), and
- (f) means for providing the results of the search of the second advertising means to the user (Davies: col. 5, lines 54-59).

Regarding claim 8, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 7, wherein the first and second advertising boards are distributed (Davies: col. 2, lines 9-11; col. 1, lines 57-63).

Regarding claim 9, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 7, wherein a plurality of first and second advertising boards are provided each of which advertises the services available in a particular market (Davies: col. 2, lines 19-31; col. 4, lines 38-44).

Regarding claim 10, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 7, wherein means are provided for interrogating the user to determine specific preferences (Davies: col. 4, lines 1-8).

Regarding claim 11, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 10, wherein the specific preferences comprise where and/or how and/or when the information found by the second searching means, is to be communicated to the user (Davies: col. 6, lines 34-55).

Regarding claim 12, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 7, wherein a banking agent is provided for monitoring all financial transactions that take place as a result of the request from the user, between the information brokers and the information content suppliers (Davies: col. 2, lines 19-31; col. 4, lines 38-44).

Regarding claim 13, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 12, wherein each user has an account that is monitored by the banking agent is up-dated as soon as response to a request for information is accepted for delivery to the user (Davies: col. 5, lines 60- col. 6, line 7).

Regarding claim 14, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 1, wherein a marketing agent is provided for setting up the first and second advertising boards and subsequent boards introduced onto the platform (Davies: col. 1, lines 57-63).

Regarding claim 15, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 14, wherein the marketing agent arranges the boards according to the type of services being marketed thereon (Davies: col. 5, lines 1-29; the agent can index the info from metadata; col. 7, lines 1-5).

Regarding claim 16, a distributed platform for co-ordinating user access to information provided by content service providers (Davies: col. 1, lines 28-40), the platform comprising:

- (a) a user interface (Davies: col. 3, lines 25-35, 41-45);
- (b) a content service provider advertising board for advertising services of content service providers (Davies: col. 4, lines 38-44; page in question);
- (c) a first searching agent for searching the content service provider advertising board for services, based on the request from the user (Davies: col. 4, lines 30-44); and
- (d) means for providing the results of the search of the content service provider advertising board to the user (Davies: col. 5, lines 54-59).

Regarding claim 17, a distributed platform as claimed in claim 16, further including:

(a) a broker advertising board for advertising the services of brokers that act as intermediaries between the content service provider and the user (Davies: col. 4, lines 38-44; another page in question or another IPS; col. 6, lines 34-40); and

(b) a second searching agent for searching the broker advertising board for available services based on the request from the user (Davies: col. 6, lines 34-40),

wherein the second searching agent identifies a suitable broker and the first searching agent is associated with that broker (Davies: col. 6, lines 34-40).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 18-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,931,907 by Davies et al in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,826,261 by Spencer.

Claim 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,931,907 by Davies et al in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,826,261 by Spencer in further view of "Evolving Agents for Personalized Information Filter" by Sheth B. & Maes. P, published in 1993 ("Sheth B & Maes. P").

Regarding claim 18,

The Davies reference teaches a distributed agent system including a plurality of agents arranged to interact one with another within an agent community (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-42), each agent including:

(a) a plurality of agent components, each of which includes processes arranged to carry out a particular task for the agent (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50).

The Spencer reference teaches an information retrieval system that retrieves from:

(b) a group message board within at least some of the components, for mediating communications between processes of the same component (Spencer: col. 3, lines 7-24; Davies: col. 1, lines 51-56);

(c) an internal message board, for mediating communications between processes of different components (Spencer: col. 3, lines 7-24; Davies: col. 4, lines 18-30; col. 5, lines 25-36); and

(d) an external message board, for mediating communications with other agents in the agent community (Spencer: col. 3, lines 7-24; Davies: col. 6, lines 33-62).

The Spencer reference further teaches the information retrieval system produces globally accurate results to user's queries, without the bandwidth, accuracy and scalability problems of the systems that do share predetermined frequency information (Spencer: col. 2, lines 66– col. 3, line 4).

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create the system of a distributed agent system including a plurality of agents arranged to interact one with another within an agent community as taught by Davies et al while employing retrieval from multiple document databases as taught by Spencer in order to produce globally accurate results to user's queries, without the bandwidth, accuracy and scalability problems of the systems that do share predetermined frequency information (Spencer: col. 2, lines 66– col. 3, line 4).

Claims 19-23 are rejected under the same rationale given above. In the rejections set forth, the examiner will address the additional limitations and point to the relevant teachings of Davies et al and Spencer.

Regarding claim 19, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 18, wherein inter-component messages are sent from the group message board to the internal message board (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-39).

Regarding claim 20, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 18, wherein inter-component messages are received by the group message board from the internal message board (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-39).

Regarding claim 21, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 18, wherein inter-agent messages pass from the internal message board to the external message board and from there to the external agent to which the inter-agent message is directed (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-42).

Regarding claim 22, a distributed agent system as claimed in as claim 18, wherein inter-agent messages are received in the external message board and passed to the internal message board (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-39).

Regarding claim 23, a distributed agent system as claimed in any claim 18, wherein the internal and external message boards are in the same component (Davies: col. 6, lines 33-36; IPS).

Regarding claim 24,

The Davies reference teaches a system of accessing information stored in a distributed information database with a community of software agents.

The Sheth B & Maes. P reference teaches a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 18, wherein a filter is provided for delegating or defining where messages should be passed (Sheth B & Maes. P: page 1, col. 2, paragraphs 3-5).

The Davies reference further teaches known techniques which might be employed in an adaptive agent include genetic algorithms, learning from feedback and memory-based reasoning (Davies: col. 7, lines 33-39).

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create the system of accessing information stored in a distributed information

database with a community of software agents as taught by Davies et al while employing information filtering as taught by Sheth B & Maes. P in order to further expand the adaptability of the agent (Davies: col. 7, lines 33-39).

Claims 25 and 26 are rejected under the same rationale given above. In the rejections set fourth, the examiner will address the additional limitations and point to the relevant teachings of Davies et al and Sheth B & Maes. P.

Regarding claim 25, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the filter is registered in the internal message board (Davies: col. 4, lines 18-30; col. 5, lines 25-36).

Regarding claim 26, a distributed agent system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the filter is registered in the group message board (Davies: col. 1, lines 44-50; col. 4, lines 18-30; col. 5, lines 25-36).

Prior Art

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

U. S. Patent No. 6,493,703 issued to Knight et al.

U. S. Patent No. 5,778,367 issued to Wesinger Jr. et al.

U. S. Patent No. 5,748,954 issued to Mauldin.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Benjamin R Bruckart whose telephone number is (703) 305-0324. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-5:30 PM with every other Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hosain Alam can be reached on (703) 308-6662. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications and After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-0324.

Benjamin R Bruckart
Examiner
Art Unit 2155

brb *brb*
January 13, 2004

Hosain Alam
HOSAIN ALAM
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER